

OPINION 1544

ETHMIIDAE Busck, 1909 (Insecta, Lepidoptera): given precedence over AZINIDAE Walsingham, 1906

Ruling

(1) Under the plenary powers it is hereby ruled that the family-group name ETHMIIDAE Busck, 1909 is to be given precedence over the name AZINIDAE Walsingham, 1906, whenever the two are considered synonyms.

(2) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:

- (a) *Ethmia* Hübner, [1819] (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Phalaena pyrausta* Hübner, [1819];
- (b) *Azinis* Walker, 1863 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Azinis hilarella* Walker, 1863.

(3) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:

- (a) *pyrausta* Hübner, [1819], as published in the binomen *Phalaena pyrausta* (specific name of the type species of *Ethmia* Hübner, [1819]);
- (b) *hilarella* Walker, 1863, as published in the binomen *Azinis hilarella* (specific name of the type species of *Azinis* Walker, 1863).

(4) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology:

- (a) ETHMIIDAE Busck, 1909 (type genus *Ethmia* Hübner, [1819], with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over AZINIDAE Walsingham, 1906 (type genus *Azinis* Walker, 1863) whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (b) AZINIDAE Walsingham, 1906 (type genus *Azinis* Walker, 1863) with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over ETHMIIDAE Busck, 1909 (type genus *Ethmia* Hübner, [1819]), whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms.

History of Case 2550

An application to give precedence to ETHMIIDAE Busck, 1909 over AZINIDAE Walsingham, 1906 was received from Professor J. A. Powell (*University of California, Berkeley, U.S.A.*) on 13 January 1986. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 44: 185–187 (September 1987). Notice of the case was sent to appropriate journals. No comments were received.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 December 1988 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 44: 186–187. At the close of the voting period on 1 March 1989 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes — 22: Bayer, Bock, Cocks, Cogger, Corliss, Dupuis, Hahn, Heppell, Holthuis, Kabata, Kraus, Martins de Souza, Melville, Mroczkowski, Nielsen, Ride, Savage, Schuster, Thompson, Trjapitzin, Uéno, Willink

Negative votes — 1: Starobogatov.

No votes were returned by Gruchy, Halvorsen and Lehtinen.

Heppell voted for the case, but with reservation, and made the following comment: 'It has been stated, in this case as well as in a number of other recent cases, that the family-group name (AZINIDAE) cannot be suppressed without also suppressing its type genus (*Azinis*). The cumbersome procedure of relative priority is then brought into play as a means of preserving an almost totally unused and unneeded name, just in case it should ever be required at some future date. This procedure, by placing the conditionally suppressed name on the Official List, may lead zoologists who are not specialists in nomenclature to assume its status has thereby been enhanced. It seems to me worth considering whether the Commission could instead, in such cases, suppress the senior family-group name for the purposes of the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy, using a formula such as 'AZINIDAE Walsingham, 1906 and all uses of that name prior to the publication of ETHMIIDAE Busck, 1909', or 'all uses of the name AZINIDAE prior to [any date up to the date of the Opinion]', which would: (1) leave taxonomists free to reintroduce the name, with a new author and date but of course with the same type genus, at some date subsequent to that of the family-group name being conserved; (2) place the unwanted name (as of its original usage) on the Official Index rather than the Official List; (3) allow the generic name to retain its potential for becoming the type genus again at any time subsequent to the date determined by the Commission'.

Original references

The following are the original references to the names placed on Official Lists by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

AZINIDAE Walsingham, 1906, *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (7)18: 177.

Azinis Walker, 1863, *List of the specimens of lepidopterous Insects in the collection of the British Museum*, Part 28, p. 541.

Ethmia Hübner, [1819], *Verzeichnis bekannter Schmettlinge* [sic], p. 163.

ETHMIIDAE Busck, 1909, *Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Washington*, 11: 91.

hilarella, *Azinis*, Walker, 1863, *List of the specimens of lepidopterous Insects in the collection of the British Museum*, Part 28, p. 541.

pyrausta, *Phalaena*, Hübner, [1819], *Verzeichnis bekannter Schmettlinge* [sic], p. 163.